

July 19, 2019

Dear ECU Community,

We have received a great deal of feedback since the Trump Campaign visit on Wednesday (July 17). As you know and was stated several times, East Carolina University did not sponsor, host or endorse the event. As a public university, however, we must follow federal, state and UNC System guidelines regarding free speech. The Trump Campaign rented Minges Coliseum, which is available to any for-profit or non-profit group. With this event and with any event on our campus, the University does not control, and is not responsible for, the content of speech.

East Carolina University attracts students, faculty and staff from all over the region, state, nation and world. For decades, people with a wide variety of backgrounds and experiences have been proud to call themselves Pirates. A diverse campus allows us to pursue excellence in many ways and fields, to communicate effectively with a broad variety of audiences, and – according to our alumni – to be well prepared for the world after graduation.

ECU is indeed a welcoming and accepting campus that provides students, faculty and staff the opportunity and space to share their thoughts and views. We strive to create an environment where individuals feel wanted, welcomed, appreciated and valued, understanding that there will be times we disagree. That challenge, and sometimes conflict, builds resiliency and sharpens the intellect. That's the beauty of living, learning and working at a great institution of higher education.

We encourage and welcome civil discourse on our campus. The U.S. Constitution allows the intellectual and individual freedom of expression that enables us to live our mission. These freedoms do not protect the right to hear and listen to only what is convenient and agreeable but do protect the right to be able to respond and express one's own views. We will facilitate such conversations on the campus in the fall.

Across our campus, we strive to live out our ECU Creed (included below) and work toward a community that cherishes our diversity as a strength and value in our community and nation.

The ECU Creed

In the pursuit of educational excellence, responsible stewardship, and intellectual freedom, the community of scholars at East Carolina University is committed to learning at the highest level. Founded in the tradition of service and leadership, members of our academic society exemplify high standards of professional and personal conduct at all times. Therefore, we aspire to the following:

As an East Carolinian,

I will carry out personal and academic integrity.

I will respect and appreciate the diversity of our people, ideas, and opinions.

I will be thoughtful and responsible in my words and actions.

I will engage in purposeful citizenship by serving as a positive role model.

By striving to meet these aspirations on and off campus, our individual freedom to learn and a pledge to serve will be preserved.

Dan Gerlach
Interim Chancellor

Ron Mitchelson
Provost & Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

Sara Thorndike
Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance

Chris Dyba
Vice Chancellor for University Advancement

Mark Stacy
Vice Chancellor for Health Sciences

Jay Golden
Vice Chancellor for Research, Economic Development, and Engagement

Virginia Hardy
Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs

Donna Payne
University Counsel and Vice Chancellor for Legal Affairs